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SOLAR STORM HITS EARTH, CREATING LIGHT SHOWS IN NORTH HEMISPHERE

The Sun emitted two strong solar flares on May 10-11 at 9.23 pm and 7.44 am, US EDT, according to NASA's Solar Dynamic Observatory

BRITAIN SKIES WITNESSED NORTHERN LIGHTS

The greenish hues, also known as the Northern Lights were prominently on display in Britain on Friday night. The Northern Lights are expected to continue into the weekend and possibly next week. People posted pictures of the Northern Lights on social media captured on their cellphones. The Hanle Dark Sky Reserve in Himalayas reported a crimson glow in Ladakh

STARLINK SATELLITES UNDER PRESSURE

- The US NOAA alerted operators of power plants and spacecraft in orbit to take precautions. The flares could damage high-voltage transmission lines of power grids and satellites, disrupting navigation and communication services
- *Xinhua* reported that communications and navigations in most of China will be impacted in the weekend, adding the country has issued a red alert

11-yr cycle

HEIGHTENED ACTIVITY IN SUN IS WITNESSED AS IT APPROACHES ITS PEAK

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

SEXUAL ASSAULT

Devaraje Gowda sent to 14 days' judicial custody

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Holenarasipur/Bengaluru

THE Holenarasipur JMFC court on Saturday remanded BJP leader and advocate Devaraje Gowda in judicial custody for 14 days.

Gowda was detained by Hiriyur police in Chitradurga district on Friday night. Holenarasipur town police led by Hallimysuru circle inspector and Banavara sub-inspector took Gowda into custody in Hiriyur and brought him to Holenarasipur on Saturday around 4.30 am. Two mobile phones, some documents and a Toyota Innova SUV in which Gowda allegedly tried to escape were seized.

Holenarasipur town police have invoked rape and sexual assault charges against Gowda based on fresh statements by the 36-year-old victim.

The sexual harassment complaint against Gowda was filed by the victim on April 1. Sections 376, 354a, 354c, 448, 504 and 506 have been invoked against Gowda. The police started tracking his cell phones after his audio recordings with former MLA LR Shivarame Gowda came to light.

In connection with the case registered against him on April 1, Gowda filed an application for anticipatory bail on May 8. The petition has been posted for hearing on May 15.

Hassan superintendent of police MS Mohammad Sujeetha quizzed Gowda for almost four hours. His statements were recorded at the circle police inspector's office in the presence of additional SP Venkatesh Naidu and DSP Ashok. CONTINUED ON: P4

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal during a roadshow at Mehrauli in New Delhi on Saturday | SHEKHAR YADAV

Modi playing the game of 1 nation, 1 leader: Kejriwal

Claims Mamata, Uddhav, Stalin, Tejashwi could end up in jail as well

ANUP VERMA @ New Delhi

OUT on a 21-day interim bail ordered by the Supreme Court, AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday was scathing in his attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP, accusing them of orchestrating a perilous game of 'one nation, one leader.' Kejriwal also sought to stir the leadership pot within the BJP, speculating on Modi's successor as the prime minister.

The chief minister alleged that his incarceration was a "Modi move to quell opposition voices as AAP was a potential threat to the BJP". "Mamata Banerjee, M K Stalin, Uddhav Thackeray and Tejashwi Yadav could face similar suppression if Modi secures victory in the Lok Sabha polls," he said.

In his first press conference after coming out of Tihar jail, the AAP chief cited instances of what he said was the diminishing stature of veteran BJP leaders like L K Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi, Sumitra Mahajan, Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Manohar Lal Khattar.

"Ours is a very small party, it has governments in just two states; it is a 10-year-old party. The prime minister left no stone unturned in crushing it," he claimed. "Our top leaders have been jailed. If top leaders of big parties go to jail, the party is seen as finished," said Kejriwal. "He (PM) thought that AAP would be finished, but this is not a party but a thought, the more they (BJP) try to finish it, the more would it grow."

The AAP leader also alleged a 'war of succession' involving UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Modi. "It is Yogi's turn. If Modi wins the election, he will change the UP CM within two months," he claimed.

"Many people ask me: 'Who is the PM candidate of the INDIA bloc'? I ask the BJP: who will be your PM? Modi ji turns 75 in September next year. Modi ji made a rule that whoever is aged 75 years will retire. So, I want to ask the BJP, who is your PM candidate after next year?" said Kejriwal.

OFFERS PRAYERS AT HANUMAN MANDIR

Kejriwal along with his wife Sunita and his Punjab counterpart Bhagwant Mann on Saturday offered prayers at the Hanuman temple in Connaught Place

MODI TO STAY PM TILL 2029: SHAH

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Hyderabad

ASSERTING that Narendra Modi will be the prime minister till 2029, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday clarified that there was no confusion in the party in this regard. He was responding to Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's barb on the informal 75-year age cap in the BJP to hold electoral office.

Speaking at a press conference here, Shah asserted, "I want to tell this to Arvind Kejriwal and company and the INDIA bloc that you have nothing to be happy about Modiji turning 75. There is no such provision in the BJP's constitution. Modi will complete this tenure and continue to lead the country in the future. There is no confusion in the BJP."

He alleged that the INDIA bloc leaders knew the NDA would cross 400 seats and had resorted to spreading misconceptions. Shah rubbished allegations that the BJP would scrap reservations for SCs, STs and OBCs. Despite full majority in Parliament in the last two terms, the BJP never initiated any steps as alleged by the Congress, Shah said. He added that the BJP priorities were the construction of the Ram Mandir, abrogation of Article 370, reservations for women, and continuing SC, ST and OBC quotas.

Responding to recent comments by Congress leader Mani Shankar Aiyar, Shah asserted that Pakistan-occupied Kashmir belongs to India.

INTERVIEW

SHAH SAYS NO CHANGE IN QUOTA POLICY

Union home minister and BJP's chief strategist Amit Shah alleges that Congress wants to snatch away SC/ST and OBC quotas and give them to Muslims, as they did in K'taka | P7

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Kharge's turn to write to poll body

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

THE war of words between Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and the Election Commission (EC) continued on Saturday as the former shot off another letter in response to the poll body's strong rebuttal on voter turnout data.

In a post on X, Kharge said it was surprising how the EC responded to his "open letter" while ignoring other complaints. "The open letter is addressed to our alliance partners and not to the Commission. Surprisingly, the EC wanted to respond to this letter while ignoring several other complaints given directly to it," Kharge wrote. The poll panel responded to Kharge's open letter with a strongly-worded missive.

It accused him of "attempting to push a biased narrative under the guise of seeking clarifications".

The open letter alleged that the "delay in the release of voter turnout data was an attempt to doctor the final results". In response, the EC termed the allegations baseless and "reflective of a biased and deliberate attempt to spread confusion". In his letter, Kharge expressed his misgivings about the language of the letter by the EC.

EXPRESS READ

Kodagu murder accused nabbed

Madikeri: Prakash Onkarappa, 34, who had allegedly murdered a Class 10 girl and fled with her severed head at Surlabbi village in Kodagu on Thursday night, was arrested at Garvale on Saturday morning. The severed head was recovered nearly 100 metres away from the crime spot | P5

Cong creating fear over Pak atom bomb: PM

Bhubaneswar: PM Narendra Modi on Saturday said the Congress has begun to scare the people of the country on the nuclear capabilities of Pakistan as it is staring at its worst defeat in the ongoing elections. To keep its vote bank happy, the party is finding new ways to create fear in people's minds | P5

BU HOSTEL GIRLS TAKE TO STREETS FOR WATER

PURAN CHOUDHARY @ Bengaluru

NEARLY 600 girls from Bangalore University (BU), Jnana Bharathi campus, took to the streets on Saturday to protest against water scarcity and frequent power cuts in their hostel.

Holding empty buckets and mugs, they sought immediate action from the vice-chancellor and other officials of the university. The students, who live in Ramabai girls' hostel, said the officials did nothing though they have been facing water shortage for the past nine months. Because of water scarcity, they feared infection due to unhygienic washrooms. "Substandard food is being served in the mess because of the crisis," they alleged.

The students claimed that they had showers only twice a week. "We complained to the warden and the manager several times, but no steps have been taken to solve our problems. Whenever we approach the V-C, his office tells us that he is busy or is travelling at the moment," said a student.

Meanwhile, the officials attributed the water shortage to power outage due to the recent rain which led to uprooting of trees and collapse of several electric poles. P5

Students protest at BU's Jnana Bharathi campus on Saturday

3 abducted, given electric shocks to private parts

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kalaburagi

AN incident of torturing three people by giving electric shocks to their private parts after kidnapping them has been reported in Kalaburagi city.

Seven people have been arrested in this connection. Kalaburagi police commissioner Chetan R told *TNSE* on Saturday that Arjun, a second-hand car dealer from Devanoor village in Sedam taluk, and his friends Sameeroddin and Abdul Reheman came to Kalaburagi on May 5 to show a car to one Ramesh.

After a test drive, Ramesh agreed to buy the car. He took Arjun and his two friends to Hagarga road in Kalaburagi city, stating that he had to collect money from a man there. P5

BJP sees red as Left tries to wrest Begusarai, de-saffronise it

RAMASHANKAR @ Patna

BEGUSARAI, once known as the Leningrad of Bihar, dramatically took a right turn in the past two Lok Sabha elections, riding on the back of the Modi wave. This time, however, the Communist Party of India (CPI) is working overtime to wrest its stronghold from the BJP.

SHOWTIME FOR GLADIATORS

Unlike 2019, it's going to be a direct contest between the BJP and the Opposition bloc. The BJP has fielded Union minister and its fire brand leader Giriraj Singh (71) as its candidate again. He is locked in a tough fight with CPI's Awadhesh Kumar Rai (72), two-time MLA from Bachhwada assembly constituency in Begusarai district. Rai is the joint candidate of the Opposition INDIA bloc comprising the RJD, the Congress, and three Left parties.

The candidature of Rai, a Yadav by caste (OBC), shows the Left party's intent to tap the RJD's solid MY (Muslim-Yadav) support base. In the 2019 election, Giriraj had won the seat by defeating CPI candidate Kanhaiya Kumar (now with the Congress) by a margin of over 4 lakh votes.

This time, the CPI's optimism stems from two factors -- anti-incumbency against Giriraj and the Opposition's joint fight against the BJP. In 2019, the RJD, a major regional party, had also fielded its candidate, Tanveer Hasan, who polled 2 lakh votes, splitting the anti-BJP votes.

"Giriraj is facing the ire of voters. He has done nothing for the welfare of the people in the past five years. All he did was to raise the banner of 'Hindutva' without missing any opportunity to hurl abuses on Muslims. Will the people of Begusarai vote for him for this?" asks Randhir Kumar Singh, a resident of Rosera.

Randhir, who owns a departmental store in the sub-divisional town, says that even those belonging to Giriraj Singh's caste (Bhumihars) are not happy with him. Randhir's anger against the BJP nominee is corroborated by Vijay Kumar Singh, a retired government employee of Begusarai town. "Giriraj mainly is relying on 'Modi magic' to win the election this time again," he remarks.

The ground situation is different from that of 2019 because there is a united Opposition candidate. However, this in itself may not be enough to defeat Giriraj. The CPI candidate's chances will greatly dependent on how well he is able to woo the Muslim-Yadav vote base of the RJD. On the other hand, BJP supporters believe Prime Minister Narendra Modi's blitzkrieg will overshadow all other issues and Giriraj will win.

Awadhesh Kumar Rai and Giriraj Singh (R)

ILLUSTRATION: MANDAR PARSEKAR